

SUNRISE MOUNTAIN INSTANT STUDY AREA

1. THE STUDY AREA - 10,240 acres

Sunrise Mountain Instant Study Area (ISA) (NV-050-0420) is located on the east side of the Las Vegas Valley and includes Frenchman and Sunrise Mountains. The ISA contains approximately 10,240 acres. Of this, 10,070 acres is BLM lands and 170 acres are private holdings.

The entire ISA boundary follows Section and Subsection lines. The west boundary runs along the eastern side of Sections 14, 23, 26 of T.20S., R.62E. with a jog around private holdings in Section 35 and then continues along the eastern side of Section 1, T.21S., R.62E. The boundary then heads in a northeasterly direction on Subsection lines within Section 1, T.21S., R.62E. and then in a northern direction along the western side of Section 6, T.21S., R.63E., and Sections 31 and 30 of T.20S., R.63E. The boundary then heads due east along the southern side of Sections 19, 20, 21 and 22 of T.20S., R.63E, jogs south around Section 26, T.20S., R.63E. and then along the southern side of Section 24, T.20S., R.63E. From this point the boundary heads due north along the eastern side of Section 24, T.20S., R.63E. and then due west along the southern side of Sections 13, 14, 15 and 16, T.20S., R.63E. The boundary line then heads due north along the west side of Section 16, T.20S., R.63E., jogs west along the southern side of Section 8, T.20S., R.63E. to the middle of that Section and then heads north to the bottom of Section 5, T.20S., R.63E. where it heads due west along the southern side of Sections 5 and 6, T.20S., R.63E. The boundary then stairsteps in a southwest direction through Section 12, T20S., R.62E.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE -

**0 acres recommended for wilderness
10,240 acres recommended for nonwilderness**

The recommendation for this WSA is to not designate it wilderness but to release all 10,240 acres for uses other than wilderness, primarily because of a lack of wilderness character.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: A major paved highway accessing the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, numerous roads, powerlines, communication sites, and various structures clearly leave the unit in an unnatural condition

B. Solitude: The Sunrise Mountain ISA clearly does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The Sunrise Mountain ISA clearly does not offer outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

D. Special Features: Gypsum Cave, located in the northeastern corner of the ISA, contains some of the earliest evidence of man in Nevada and the western United States.

A Threatened and Endangered (T&E) plant, Arctomecon californica or bearpoppy, is located in the northeastern portion of the ISA and the eastern end of the SMNA. It typically prefers gypsum soils, which are common to this area. Another T&E plant, Agave utahensis var. eborispina or century plant, is believed to grow at the central western edge of the SMNA.

4. MANAGEABILITY

Because of easy accessibility of most of the area, and the difficulty with identifying the boundary, this ISA would be very difficult to manage as wilderness. The entire ISA boundary follows Section and Subsection lines.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

Within the Sunrise Mountain ISA, there are several areas that are used for rockhounding. Within these areas agate, jasper, and amethystine can be found. The ISA also contains numerous mining claims.

6. SUMMARY OF ISA SPECIFIC COMMENTS

This area was evaluated with other units in the Statewide Initial Wilderness Inventory. During the public comment period, news releases and a Federal Register Notice were used to inform the various publics of the review period, the opportunity for comment, and locations of meetings. The story was carried widely in Southern Nevada Newspapers. Several local radio stations and one TV station covered the comment period. Both the Lincoln and Esmeralda County Commissions as well as the Lincoln County Conservation District Board were briefed. Several local organizations such as the Southern Nevada Conservation Council, Nevada Public Land Users Association, and the Sierra Club were briefed. An open house was conducted at the Las Vegas District Office relating to the District recommendations, and Statewide summary meetings were also conducted in Las Vegas, Reno, Battle Mountain and Ely.

The only comment received on the Sunrise Mountain ISA noted that resource values other than wilderness are significant in the area.